

Cemetery Commission Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: January 14, 2016, 4:30 pm

Commissioners Present: Rita Church, Allison Curran, Barry Trutor, Donna Waldron

Staff Present: Anne D’Alton, Cemetery Office Assistant

Public Present: Jim Woodman, 3 Stones of Vermont
Marge Allard, Preservation Burlington

Attachments: None

I. Approval of agenda—unanimously approved.

II. Approval of Minutes from December 3, 2015 Meeting

A. Rita Church moved to approve, Donna Waldron seconded the motion, unanimously approved.

III. Old Business

A. Perpetual Care Fund management

1. Barry Trutor has contacted City of Burlington CAO Bob Rustin, requesting information about the Cemetery Perpetual Care Fund management. Rustin proposed a meeting, which they will schedule soon. Trutor will report on this at a future Commission meeting.
 - ◆ Church thanked Trutor for making the time and effort to pursue this; the other commissioners concurred.

B. Repairing grave stones

1. Trutor has requested a grant from the Vermont Old Cemetery Association for materials needed to repair and clean monuments in all three City-owned cemeteries, starting with Section G and the front area of Greenmount. He passed around the written proposal.
 - ◆ Waldron asked for clarification of the location of these areas. Annie D’Alton pointed them out on the framed blueprint of Greenmount hanging on the wall in the conference room, noting the typo (the “C” in the north corner should be “G”).
 - ◆ Church recalled that the Commission had considered requesting a grant from VOCA a few years ago, but felt that it was more important for the organization to grant funds to cemeteries needing crucial assistance after the recent major flooding.
2. Trutor reported that Jim LaBarge of VOCA is willing to help. In one day, he was able to right 20-30 fallen stones in the cemetery in Ira, Vermont.
3. When he was attending the Fall VOCA meeting, Trutor met Jim Woodman and Deborah Hardy in the Richmond cemetery where they were repairing headstones, and thanked them for their work, and willingness to help restore stones in City of Burlington cemeteries. He passed around a report on their work.
4. Trutor reminded the Commission that Preservation Burlington has also expressed interest in helping to repair stones in City of Burlington cemeteries. He passed around Liisa Reimann’s 2014 article about Elmwood Cemetery in The Sentinel.



5. Trutor also intends to reconnect with Art Cohn, once a plan is made for starting the work.
 6. Recent UVM Archeology graduates interested in cemeteries may be interested in helping, too. Trutor met Courtney Doyle, who has documented the status of the cemetery on Meach Island.
 7. Scott McLaughlin, whose UVM classes are responsible for the Greenmount & Elmwood Walking Tour booklets, would be a valuable resource, too.
 8. Physical assistance will be needed. Trutor suggests contacting college sports teams; Church suggested UVM fraternities.
 9. The next step is to pull together all the interested parties and make a plan to start work. Trutor noted that he is willing to take the role of photo-documenter and organizer, but we need a leader—someone who is an expert in this field.
 10. Waldron was impressed with all the work Trutor has done to reach out to other organizations, and with the support these organizations are willing to offer. She made a motion to proceed with monument repair efforts, utilizing the resources gathered by Trutor, and starting with the front area and Section G in Greenmount. Church seconded the motion, all approved.
- C. Waldron turned the meeting over to Jim Woodman, to help lead the Commission in their efforts to get the monument repair project started.
1. Woodman said he'd help in any way he can, including training workers. Suggestions for fundraising:
 - ◆ Suggested contacting UVM: they are neighbors to Greenmount, and he believed Wheeler, who is buried there, was a founder.
 - ◆ Contact the Lake Monsters: another neighbor.
 - ◆ Contact prominent families who own lots, such as Sparhawk (D'Alton noted the Sam was the one who procured & spread gravel to fill the potholes at the entrance to Greenmount).
 - ◆ Waldron will talk to Branch Out Burlington—they might be interested in helping because they are planning their Spring, 2016 tree walk in Greenmount.
 - ◆ Allison Curran asked if the DAR has been approached—she has a friend who is a member.
 - ◆ Church suggested UVM Alumni fund. D'Alton suggested they might be interested in researching Zadock Thompson stone (did it fall & get buried? Or could a new one be installed?)
 - ◆ Waldron asked Woodman for a cost estimate. Depending on whether there is a base or foundation, a fallen over, broken tablet would cost about \$125 to repair & clean.
 - ◆ Waldron asked D'Alton how to explore tapping into the Perpetual Care income—contact Jesse Bridges, who is Cemetery Superintendent, thus responsible for deciding if and how the income is spent.
 - ◆ Church asked how much money the Commission should request, knowing that often the response for financial assistance is that there is no money available. Woodman noted that in the State of Vermont publication “Digging Deep”, it states that if the lot owners are all deceased, stone repair becomes the town's responsibility.
 - ◆ Note in requesting funding that financial support would provide an excellent marketing opportunity for the donor, and publicity for the Cemeteries.
 - ◆ Fundraising examples: Woodman reported that Tom from Vermont Civil War is raising money to procure and install a larger marker for George Davis, who saved



Washington DC, and is buried at Lakeview, with a small marker. The plan is to unveil it at the Civil War General tour Memorial Day weekend. Also, he and Deb Hardy are asking a gun club to fund purchasing a marker for Amos Bunder, a sharpshooter in the Civil War buried at Greenmount.

2. Waldron noted that many stones have been displaced by tree roots, and asked what should be done in these cases. Woodman suggests leaving the roots alone and moving the stone.
3. Woodman explained that many stones can be installed in crushed stone, which would be much cheaper than pouring a cement foundation.
4. Waldron asked about improving legibility of lettering. Woodman noted that cleaning helps a lot. Stone would have to be transported to a company in Barre if re-lettering was to be done. D'Alton noted that many inscriptions have been documented.
5. Woodman noted that many older stones are made of marble, which is very brittle. They are easy to push or knock over-- being top-heavy, they break at the base. The Cemetery staff is extremely caring and careful--the City is very fortunate to have them--but mowing done by others may be responsible for some of the damage.
6. Waldron asked how to choose which stones to repair. Woodman suggested defining a Phase 1 for fixing broken stones and lifting fallen stones. Horizontal stones are more prone to being worn by weather, stained by trees, and colonized by lichens, so raising fallen stones should be a priority.

IV. Superintendent's Items - None.

V. Commissioner's Items

- A. Jesse Bridges submitted a list of available grant resources to the Commissioners to research; discuss actions to take--tabled.
- B. Meeting schedule: Scheduled an extra meeting on Wednesday, March 2, 2016 to discuss:
 1. policy for organizations holding events at Lakeview and charging fee for participation
 2. grant money
 3. Preservation Burlington connection

VI. Office Report

- A. Jeff Shedd asked D'Alton to ask for the Commission's input on charging for the annual burial of infant cremains from the hospital.
 1. They will need to purchase a new lot soon, as their existing one is full.
 2. We have allowed them to bury more containers of cremains per grave than usual, even though the containers are larger than usual (we've used the space very efficiently) and Jeff is proposing allowing only the usual 6/grave from now on.
 3. We have not charged for burials, even though they are always after 2 pm, which requires overtime, and Jeff is proposing charging them the going rate (\$500 plus \$100/hour for OT).
 4. Church asked if the Clergy was paid; Waldron said it was hospital staff clergy.
 5. Trutor suggested donating the new lot but charging for burials.
 6. Waldron suggested discussing more at next meeting.



VII. Marge Allard was interested in the work planned by the Cemetery Commission, and will communicate to Preservation Burlington. She invited all to attend the PB meetings, too.

VIII. Adjournment

- A. Church moved to adjourn the meeting at 5:50. Curran seconded this motion. Unanimously approved.